

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

## A Weekly Journal

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### CONFESSIONS OF A CARETAKER.

A SERIAL STORY.

By "RITA."

Author of "*Dame Durden*," "*Darby and Joan*,"  
"*My Lord Concelit*," etc.

#### CHAPTER XII.

##### AN UNCONVENTIONAL LUNCHEON.

I WISH I could describe Mrs. Cray's face as he said those two words; but I could no more do that than I could put down on paper the coaxing, caressing inflection of the voice that spoke them.

The cloud left her brow; the light came back to her eyes.

"You impertinent boy!" she said, and laughed like her old natural self. "Of course I'm cross. See how busy I am, and you come here to interrupt me."

"Oh no!" he said; "to help; I assure you I am most desirous to be of service. But Jane is obdurate; and you—well, you haven't deigned to notice my anxiety to be useful."

"It was so skilfully concealed," said Mrs. Cray, "that I must plead guilty. But if you really wish to do anything, you might move the chairs and tables into their right places in the drawing-room. I engaged a woman to come in to-day and help Jane, but she has not turned up."

"Permit me," he said, gaily, "to supply her place. Half-a-crown and my beer—that's all I ask. Isn't that the regulation fee, Jane?"

"Too much by a sixpence, sir," I said, smiling in spite of myself.

"Dear me!" he said; "how badly we pay women for labour. I had no idea—but then I've never kept house, you see. Well, I'm off to do my duty. You'll say I

deserve the extra sixpence. By-bye, Pauline."

He went off smiling, and humming a little song to himself; and we heard him moving to and fro in the room overhead, and making a great deal of noise, if that was any guarantee of the amount of work he was accomplishing.

I saw mistress was getting restless and fidgety again.

"You'd better go and see to him, ma'am," I suggested. "He won't remember where to place the things, I'm sure."

She looked at the array on the table.

"It's nearly done, isn't it?" she said.

"I think I may leave you to finish, Jane."

"Will Mr. Tresyllion stay to lunch?" I asked. "There's plenty over from supper, you know, ma'am; and I shall have this room all straight by one o'clock."

"I'll ask him," she said, the colour rising in her face again.

She left the room, and the noises upstairs ceased abruptly.

There was very little done to the drawing-room when I went to tell them lunch was ready. And presently they came down, and took their places at the little flower-decked table, as I had often seen them do before; only now there was a constraint—a difference—I could not say exactly what; but the frank, free, careless talk lacked something of its customary ease.

She told him about her new book, and gave him a slight sketch of the plot. And I remember, too, she was accusing him of being very idle.

"You have not written a line since 'Delilah,'" she said. "Are you going to rest on your laurels?"

"I have not gained any yet," he said.

"They are the tribute of genius. Mine is mere talent."

"It is more than that," she said. "You know genius is comprehension, wide and deep, and—intuition. You showed us you possessed the latter long ago. Mere talent would never have inspired 'Delilah.'"

"Do not speak of that," he said, suddenly. "Sometimes, I feel ashamed that I ever wrote it."

"Since when?" she asked, coldly.

Their eyes met in a sort of challenge. In hers there was anger, fear, dread of the answer she had demanded, and yet a determination to have that answer.

Had Mr. Tresyllion spoken the truth, I am sure he would have said, "Since last night." As it was, his eyes sought his plate. "I suppose," he said, "it is because I have learnt the truth of what you said the first time we met. There are women—and women."

"You remember that?" she said, in a quick, breathless way.

"Oh, I think I remember everything you said to me," he answered, frankly.

"I have a fatal memory, and that evening was one of my landmarks, Pauline."

She did not answer, nor did she look at him; but the hand that lifted her glass trembled so much that a few red drops fell on the white cloth.

"Poets are not truthful as a rule," he went on reflectively. "It comes very easy to rail at life, and the sin and sham of it all. We paint our morality, and break our hearts, and dream our dreams in verse; but I believe most of us live the lives of ordinary men just the same."

"Do—you?" she said, quickly.

I think she was sorry a moment after that she had asked the question, for he coloured up to the very roots of the fair crisp curls that lay in careless waves above his forehead.

"I?" he said, presently. "Oh, I am no worse—no better. You see I have never had any home ties or interests. I seem to have been always alone as far as sympathy or affection goes. I count myself happy that I possess two friends; a man and a woman. Grant, you know. He is such a splendid fellow. Thorough—as we say."

"And the woman?" she asked, trying to steady her voice and appear indifferent.

"Oh," he said, gently. "Surely you need not ask that. The woman is yourself, Pauline."

She drew a quick, sharp breath.

I thought what a pity it all was. I, looking on, and quite forgotten, could see the game so plainly. The useless pain she was dealing herself, and his unconsciousness of the cause.

It was all so pleasant, so pretty, so harmless to look at, just for all the world like a comedy set on the stage; but I could not help thinking that when the curtain fell, and the lights were out, and the players were alone, there would be very little comedy for one of them.

I went down then and made coffee and brought it up, and they sat on there drinking the coffee and smoking cigarettes in the free-and-easy fashion that Mrs. Cray called "Bohemian."

For my part I saw no harm in it. He was just as respectful and nice as if a dozen people had been there, and I am sure Mrs. Cray was not in the least a "fast" woman. But, doubtless, the society Mrs. Grundy rules would hold up its hands in righteous horror at such goings on as I have described, and say: "Well, a woman who would do that would do anything."

But that is just where society errs.

It is the oddest thing how it blames in one person what it condones in another. How distinctly it has marked the line between the horse stealer and the person who dares only look over the hedge. How it scouts the idea of a woman having "principle," because she is unconventional and looks upon petty forms and regulations as mere words and wind of a false code of propriety.

A woman may be reckless, but not necessarily wicked; she may be eccentric, yet not improper; she may have weaknesses, but not vices; yet all are classed together in a mass by a hard and fast rule, so that it becomes as great a crime to take a little latitude as to be downright wicked.

It is very senseless and very unreasonable. For I am sure that if a woman can be frank, careless, and natural, without fear of being misjudged, she is not only the happier, but the safer for it.

Some women, of course. Their natures vary, just as men's do, or their skin, and eyes, and hair. That is why it is so foolish to say they are all alike and must all be ruled and governed in exactly the same manner. So they are hemmed round with safeguards, at which they laugh, and doctrines which they don't believe, and the result is discontent, and treachery, and sin.

These are some of the ideas I picked up at Mrs. Cray's, for, indeed, her place was what she called it—"a liberal education;" and whether they are right or wrong, I think there is some sense in them, and so I put them down here, though I'm sure some people will think me very audacious for doing it. But I can only say, as an excuse, that all my histories are true ones; and the portraits of men and women are real portraits as I found them, and lived with them, and studied them from my point of view.

It is not the point of view the world ever takes, or their friends take. It may seem coarse and rough; but there it is. I have no skill to fine it down and gloss it over. Some of those of whom I write are dead and gone; others are scattered far and wide in strange lands and distant countries.

Mr. Tresyllion left about four o'clock, and then Mrs. Cray set to work to help me, and we had the house all straight again by six when master came home.

He was in a great state of excitement, and called out for mistress directly he set foot in the hall. She told me afterwards that he had had an offer to go on a sketching tour, for three months, for the proprietors of one of the big illustrated papers. The pay was good, and he liked the idea, but had not decided until he heard what she thought of the matter.

She was very pale, and there was a strange, dreamy, absent look in her eyes. I knew what she was debating within herself. I knew it before even I read one of her "scraps of ideas" which was lying about in the bedroom. It said: "I wonder why the devil always sends a temptation at the very moment we are least capable of resisting it!"

She was always writing down ideas in this fashion, and I was never allowed to tear up any scrap of paper, for fear it might contain one of these valuable records. Old bills, the backs of envelopes, the margins of a newspaper, the cover of a book; each and all of these were utilised for her "ideas." They seemed to come to her at odd times—when she was brushing her hair, or in the midst of dressing for a party, or dusting the china in the drawing-room, or having one of her erratic meals. But I had got used to her now, and thought nothing of it. I suppose geniuses, or artists, or composers must be different to the ordinary run of people. But I do think they ought

to be very careful whom they marry, for they are apt to make a hash of domestic life, and their relative partners require to be very patient and forbearing if they want peace or comfort.

Mr. Cray suggested that his wife should let the house in Bruton Street furnished, and live at their little cottage while he was away; but she didn't seem to like the idea, and so it dropped.

For the next week all was bustle and hurry-scurry. Shopping, and packing, and preparations. One morning Mrs. Cray sent me out for something or other, and I had to go through the Park and passed along the Row where the ladies and gentlemen were riding.

I thought what a pretty sight it was. The bright sunshine sparkling through the trees, the beautiful horses, the pretty women in their neat, perfectly-cut habits. I stood by the rails to look on, when presently I saw a lady stop her horse just a few yards higher up, and stoop down to speak to a young man leaning negligently against the rails. As he lifted his hat, and looked up at the bright, sparkling little face, I recognised them both—Miss Kate and Mr. Tresyllion.

The pretty chestnut she was riding fidgeted and capered about, but his mistress did not seem inclined to cut short her conversation for any sign of impatience on his part.

As I watched them I could not help thinking how happy they looked. Once or twice she laughed; the pretty, heart-whole, ringing laugh I knew so well. Then at last she gave him her hand, and settled herself straight in the saddle, and cantered away down the mile, as pretty and as dainty a figure as ever one would wish to see.

I noticed that Mr. Tresyllion watched her till she was out of sight, and presently he turned round and came walking slowly by where I stood, swinging his cane in an absent sort of fashion, his eyes bent on the ground.

The light and laughter had all gone out of his face. It looked grave, thoughtful, almost sad.

I left the Park and went about my errand; but I had my own thoughts about that meeting, and wondered how often they had seen each other to get so friendly and so intimate as they seemed.

Mr. Tresyllion had not been to Bruton Street for a week; but my mistress had said nothing about it. Perhaps she was

thinking of weeks to come, when she would be by herself, and free to invite whom she pleased, and would be able to make up for these seven days devoted to duty and her husband.

Mr. Cray left on a Saturday, and on the next Sunday evening she had some of her special "chums," as she called them, in to supper. Two or three women whom she really liked, and who all did "something," Mr. Tresyllion and his friend, Archie Grant, and two other men—artists, whose names are not important.

Again, as I watched Mr. Tresyllion, I saw that there certainly was some change about him. He was far graver than usual, and so absent-minded, that sometimes he answered all haphazard, and at others did not even seem to know he was being spoken to. The women chaffed him; the men suggested he was thinking out another "Delilah." Mrs. Cray alone was silent on the subject, being in very brilliant spirits herself, and looking perfectly lovely in an artistic gown of dark-blue velvet and lace. Once, shortly before I left the room, I heard him say:

"Why don't you ask Mrs. Carruthers to one of your Sundays, Pauline? I'm sure she'd like to come."

She flashed a quick, searching look at him.

"Ask Mrs. Carruthers!" she echoed, coldly. "What an idea! I'd as soon think of asking the Queen, or Mrs. Gladstone; they would be just as suitable guests."

"What nonsense!" he said. "She's very clever and very brilliant; and she enjoys artistic society a great deal more than she does fashionable."

"Indeed?" said Mrs. Cray, sarcastically. "She seems to have confided her tastes to you on a very short acquaintance."

"Oh," he said, indifferently, "I have met her several times lately—at the Ellertons', and—and other places; and we were talking about people and entertainments, and what a bore they generally are; and I—well, I mentioned your Sundays. That was how the subject came up."

"I am infinitely obliged to you," she said. "But I thought you knew 'my Sundays' are exclusively for the 'working bees' of Society, not the drones or the butterflies. The passport is work of some sort. I have yet to learn that Mrs. Carruthers benefits the world at large in any other way than do most pretty and frivolous women, whom fortune has pro-

vided with ample means and extravagant tastes."

He had tact enough to notice the subject did not please her, and so changed it; but I could see that she was in a very bad temper, and far more sarcastic and cynical than I had ever seen her. The result was that Mr. Tresyllion left much earlier than usual; and that did not improve her state of mind, though I think she was careful not to betray the reason of her anger to him or any one else.

On the whole, the first festivity that inaugurated her "grass widowhood" was somewhat of a failure. She had not expected it to be so; but things rarely turn out as we promise them to ourselves, with that selfish and short-sighted wisdom that seeks its own aims and desires, and expects the force of its own inclinations to control other wills and bind other natures. I felt almost sorry for her that night. I felt sorrier still when I heard her sobbing and crying as if her heart would break, in the deserted dining-room long after her guests had gone.

#### A GOSSIP ON NAMES.

WHETHER it is to Bacon or to Shakespeare that we must ascribe the responsibility for launching on the world the hackneyed quotation on names, there is a great deal of truth in the remark. People who cry out on an extraordinary name the first time they hear it, soon become so familiar with the sound that they almost resent any one else finding the name at all out of the common.

It is surprising to many to find how large a proportion of English surnames have a plain, every-day meaning, and stand for a thing as well as for a family. But, though a name may sound base or ridiculous on first hearing it, there is so little in a name that, even with mere acquaintances, it scarcely seems incongruous that a man over six feet high should be called Little, and a V.C., Coward.

Most English surnames are taken from counties or towns, from professions or trades, from some personal peculiarity, from the father's Christian name, with Son, Fitz, Mac, Ap, or O' prefixed or affixed; or lastly, from the crest borne by the founder of the family in the Middle Ages.

We have Cornwalls, Cumberlands, Yorkes, and Somersets, from counties; and Wiltons, Barnets, Chichesters, and Henleys,



from towns. Almost every profession and trade is included in the list of names: the town gives us Butcher, Baker, Mason, Sadler, and Draper; the country—Farmer, Shepherd, Fisher, Hunter, and Fowler; and the household—Cook and Butler. To trades, too, must be assigned such names as Potts, Buckle, and Tucker. Personal peculiarities or qualities account for almost as many: there are Long and Short, Rich and Poor, Bigg and Little, Large and Small; while, of names taken from colours, there is a whole chromatic scale—Black, White, Grey, Brown, Pink, Scarlett, and many more.

Then, again, men, whose fathers boasted no surname, and who had no striking personality or peculiarity to mark them out from their fellows, were content to be known as So-and-So's son, and thus founded the families of Richardson, Johnson, Robertson, and Williamson. Not only did this principle obtain among the English peasantry, in feudal times, but even among the Norman families; and so we have Fitzpatrick and Fitzwilliam; while in Scotland there are all the Macs; in Wales, all the Aps; and in Ireland all the O's.

Sometimes the neighbours did not even take the trouble to add Son; they simply pluralised the name, and called the family Clements, Stephens, and Adams. In Wales, this is a very favourite plan, though very often they do not even add the plural, and the stranger to the mountains gets sadly confused between Evan Morgan and Morgan Evans, and between William Thomas and Thomas Williams, and all the other combinations and permutations which can be twisted out of half-a-dozen names.

To mediæval heraldry—though, perhaps, in some few cases to personal peculiarities—must be assigned such names as Wolfe, Hawke, Fox, Crane, Swan, and the like, the owners being called after the cognisances emblazoned on their shields. One of the most luminous instances of the schoolmaster being all abroad, was the derivation laid down by the English and writing-master at a public school of the name Dove. The origin of the name was actually ascribed to an ancestor having kept doves in his back-yard at some time or another!

Royalty and nobility have also given surnames to humbler folk. King, Prince, Duke, Marquis, Earle, and Baron, are all names that may be met with every day; while the lesser nobility and the territorial gentry have furnished such names as

Lord, Knight, and Squire. From the Church, too, come Pope, Bishop, Abbott, Dean, Priest, Pilgrim, Parson, and Clerk, almost every grade in the hierarchy being represented in one form or another.

There is a story told of the ancient Wiltshire family of the Dukes of Lake House which illustrates this peculiar form of surname, and also the pride of the untitled nobility in the superiority of an ancient name over a modern peerage. At the beginning of the century, a brand new Peer canonised against the Master of Lake House in the hunting-field, and, turning round, cried:

"Do you know whom you're riding over, sir? I'm Lord So-and-so!"

"And I, my lord," replied the old gentleman, with quiet dignity, "am Duke of Lake."

The names of great families are often interwoven into punning mottoes. For example, Lord Vernon's motto is, "*Ver non semper viret*," which may be taken either as a boast or as a statement of fact; and "*Forte scutum salus ducum*," the motto of Lord Fortescue, of which the same may be said. But not only is the family motto often a pun upon the name, but also the crest or coat-of-arms itself. These arms are called canting arms—for example, a doe between three bells, for Dobell; three primroses for Primrose; three "frases," or strawberry flowers, for Fraser; and many others. In Jesus College, Cambridge, are to be seen windows filled with the painted cock, which was the crest of Bishop Alcock of that College; and at New College, Oxford, a warden, named Chandler, filled the hall with painted windows representing candles, with the words "*Fiat lux*" underneath them; but he so darkened the hall by so doing, that a wit declared he should have written "*Fiant tenebræ*."

There was a story current at Cambridge, not long ago, to the effect that the Proctor one night discovered an undergraduate on Magdalen Bridge endeavouring, as he thought, to get into bed. The outraged Don demanded the inebriate's name and college, and the latter replied:

"Nott, of Magdalen."

The Proctor repeated his question, and received the same answer.

"I don't want to know what college you are not of," he cried angrily, "but what college you do belong to."

"My good man," replied the undergraduate with intense solemnity, "I have

no other name to give you. Go away, I'm trying to find my bed."

Other people, not content with punning mottoes, and canting arms, have twisted their names into anagrams and metagrams. Peter le Loyer, of Angers, who lived at a time when people had more leisure for such researches than they have at present, found that there was a line of Homer out of which could be formed his name, Peter le Loyer; the place he was born at, Huille; his province, Anjou; and his country, Gaul; three letters were left over, A, X, K, but they show the date, 1620, A.D., when this important discovery should be made. This marvellous prophecy of Homer's should stimulate Mr. Donnelly to unearthing from Shakespeare's Works the prophecy of the discovery of Bacon's cryptogram, which doubtless exists in them. Other persons have had anagrams made for them, among the best word-twistings being Prince Regent, "G.R. in pretence," and Princess Charlotte Augusta of Wales; "Her August race is lost. Oh! fatal news."

In addition to the modern sources for surnames, which have been already enumerated, there are the classics. Celebrated names of antiquity are even now borne by everyday Englishmen, and though, at first, the names sound as incongruous as do the high sounding appellations, Themistocles and Pericles, when addressed to ragged loafers in modern Greece, yet we soon get accustomed to them, and see the name Julius Cæsar appearing in the first column of a daily paper without even so much as a smile. Some years ago there was a slight disturbance amongst the undergraduates in the gallery on a Cambridge Degree Day, and an over-zealous Proctor rushed up the stairs to take the names and colleges of the noisy ones. The first man pitched upon gave in answer to the question, Homer, of Caius. The Proctor got very angry, thinking he was being laughed at, but when the next man gave Pindar of Queen's as his name, the poor Don completely lost his temper, and threatened these classical undergraduates with all the pains and penalties the University can inflict, and was hardly to be appeased by the discovery that Homer and Pindar were so entered on the University Register, and on the books of their colleges. Such great names as Alexander, Regulus, Nero, Cæsar, among the ancients, and Shakespeare, Milton, Addison, Angel, Swift, among more modern celebrities, not to mention a whole

crowd of warriors, poets, authors, artists, and heroes of fiction, may be found in the London Directory, or over shops engaged in the humblest pursuits, and taking not the slightest heed to live up to the reputation of their great namesakes.

## MY VALENTINE.

A COMPLETE STORY.

"It all happened years ago——"

But, before we get any further, or let the dear old auntie chain our attention so that any of the later links of her story should get lost, here is a picture for you.

It was Valentine's Day. A circle of girls were standing, or sitting, or kneeling about an old, white-haired lady. Each girl had had a Valentine that very morning—some were rubbish, some a matter which to the girl's own heart meant her own priceless treasure.

"You are quizzing us all, Aunt Bridget!" one, her real great-niece, Dina Court, cried.

"Of course—why not?" was the old lady's reply. Her dark brown eyes did laugh.

"Wicked! Cruel!" were two words flung out by a small, brown person, who had no pretence of kith or kin; but who, as all the girls of her acquaintance did, called Miss Bridget O'Hanlon "Auntie." "You would suggest that my gloves are a mystery—they are nothing of the sort!"

"Not Lewis James of Worri——?" the speaker was suddenly cut short. She was a fine girl of nineteen, and made her suggestion in a cool, haughty way. She meant to, and she did, irritate the small, brown person.

"Scarcely." The answer showed how proud a little woman can be. "My brother Jack heard what, it seems, Miss Dina Court heard; but both of you are lamentably mistaken. I suppose you know that Jack sent my gloves?" and Bel Dering rose from the furry rug on which she had been lying and shook herself. Anger, quite as much as vanity, had the ordering of that shaking of ruffled skirts. "I wish Valentines were all at the bottom of the sea! Stupid things!"

Aunt Bridget looked troubled.

"You dearie!" the small girl cried, shaking the old lady's shoulder. "It's not a tragic business yet. I'll give you Jack's gloves, Dina," here she, in her wildness, turned the tables upon the girl

who had irritated her. "Or, perhaps, you'd like them just as well if Lewis James had sent them—you can have them, any way!" She held out a long pair of Swede tan gloves.

"Thanks, awfully. I can tell him of your offer; but I'll not take them."

"Dina! be silent!" The old lady here showed by a stiffening of her very pleasant self, that an unexpected likeness of kinship was possible—nay, real—between her and the haughty Dina. "And keep your foolish words to yourself."

Dina moved not a muscle; but the very stillness of her meant danger. She was not going to hold back from any teasing of Bel Dering. Had not Bel flirted outrageously with the said Lewis James? And what if Jack Dering had filled the gap? Was she, Dina, to be bespoiled of any one of her conquests by a chit like Bel?

"Shall I tell you all a story about a Valentine?" Miss O'Hanlon asked.

"I hope it's not a story against them, because I like them; yes," and here Bel shook her brown head funnily, "I even like to get a pair of gloves from Jack. I'll wear them next Sunday!" Which, by-the-bye, she by no means meant to do, having, for some unaccountable reason, packed them away carefully—not for wearing. Clearly, she attached some romance to those gloves.

"Aunt Bridget is awfully sentimental, I know; she scents a tragedy in our squabble, and means to point a moral. That's it!" and here Dina bent from her usual dignity and drew a low chair to her aunt's side.

There was the lifting of the young year in the outer world. Crocuses were raising their delicate heads in the sheltered window box, and above the gray London atmosphere there shone the pure gleam of the strengthening sunlight. But the fire crackled as winter fires do, and the daintily-shod feet of the girls were cosily nestling in the thick fur of the white rug.

"It all happened years ago——"

"True?" was Bel's monosyllable.

"Don't interrupt, dear." But auntie tapped the brown, curly head, by her knee, with a mystical meaning of "Yes."

"Years ago," she repeated, "I was just twenty. I was no longer a chit at school, but a young madam, who thought herself very wise in the world's ways. But now I see what girls are like nowadays I can see what a stride has been made in every sort

of custom as regards the deportment of young people. You say now: 'I will do this, or that; I will go here, or there.' When I was young we spoke little in our parents' presence; we asked permission on every point; I know, too, that we always made a curtsy on entering the room my father and mother sat in.

"Many is the reprimand I have had for the slovenliness, the hurry of my curtsy. Well—I was a harum-scarum chit! But, as I said, I came to be twenty years of age.

"Then, indeed, my life had an event come into it. I got an invitation to go on a visit to an uncle and aunt in Exeter.

"You look scornful, Dina. To go to Exeter in those days was as much as for you last year to go to Switzerland. Nay, far more. The roads were infested with highwaymen; and one must ride in a coach the whole way. A mounted escort would have been a comfortable aid to such a journey; but what could the families of tradesfolk do thinking of such a matter?

"My father was a tradesman. We spoke plain English on that score, then, and thought he was a wealthy man; and I know we had luxuries beyond what many girls of noble birth had; yet, there it was, we were trading folk, and our ways were seemly thereto.

"I do not know whether the inn is now in existence where, on a November afternoon, I, with father and mother to start me, got into the famous 'Quicksilver' coach. Mother, I know, felt it a fearsome matter to send an ignorant maid like me on her travels alone; but I must go alone, or not at all, and in those days I was about as high-spirited and dauntless a young thing as London city held.

"It was our own family coach which took father, mother, myself and my trunks from our house in the Poultry where father traded as a goldsmith; and there the dear thing stood waiting to carry my parents back when I should have rolled off on my travels.

"For a moment I felt a lump in my throat as, through the murky fog, I looked at Cadgett, the coachman, on the box in his many-caped coat.

"I was utterly ashamed of myself; so, with a jerk of my shoulders, I turned my back upon coach, and Jarvie, and all.

"Mother was talking in her gracious, gentle way with a tall, old lady, whose dress was—well! I cannot explain it. It was all black silk, and so much black silk that, in my quizzical mind, I decided she

must have had a husband who belonged to the Company of Mercers.

"But she was my Lady Bellasis, and her maid, a meek, drab-coloured dame of fifty, was standing at her elbow with a pug in her arms and with her lady's reticule in her hand.

"If mother had known who the haughty Duchess was could she have spoken so easily, putting me, the goldsmith's daughter, actually under the care of my Lady Bellasis? Verily, I think dear mother measured the world's greatness more coolly than I. She would not have felt abashed by the fact of having speech with a courtly lady, while I, young ignoramus that I was, really felt timorous when I became enlightened as to the rank of my companion.

"Few travellers were taking the road on that day. Not one other inside passenger came beside us three; but packages were amply sufficient to fill all the space.

"The lady took up her imposed office of guardian very promptly. She was haughty without any manner of doubt; but—you know I have said I was high-spirited and fearless—I was at my ease. She was entirely kind, if she was cool. She began by drawing aside her voluminous black silk mantle. It was richly soft and lined with sable, and as she moved it she made me sit by her.

"I had placed myself opposite to her, and with the maid.

"'You will be better here, child,' she said.

"'But shall I not incommode you, madam?' was my answer.

"'If so, I can endure it. Come.'

"I dared then say no more; but seated myself as I was bidden.

"I do not think any more was said until we were leaving the murky streets behind us. Once or twice I had caught the lady's glance fixed on me, but—do not laugh—I was having a quiet cry in my dim corner, and cared not one jot for the curious eyes of any stranger at all.

"The coach started at four o'clock to the minute; so you will see that we soon had darkness upon us. My new quilted silk pelisse, too, was none too warm, and I suppose I must have shivered with cold or dreariness.

"'You have wraps with you, child; put them on.'

"'Yes,' I said, weakly.

"'You'll be a poor traveller if you do not make yourself as comfortable as you can. Help her, Wilson; tuck that fur cloak

round her feet. A beautiful cloak, my dear,' she ended cheerily.

"But I had never heard such command as was in the lady's manner to her maid. The woman obeyed, but I knew in a moment that if the mistress was friendly, the maid was the reverse. My eyes took refuge from her sour countenance by glancing at and resting upon the clear-cut, pale, proud features of my new friend. Brown eyes of a calm, and possibly stern sort; grey, frizzed curls set on high round her forehead, with a black velvet band to hold them in their place; a high-bridged nose; all gave her an unmistakeable air of severe pride.

"As I looked, she smiled slightly, and then I became aware that my face had been undergoing a keener scrutiny than hers had from me.

"'You are not like your mother, child.'

"'Oh, but I am!' was my hot answer.

"To be like mother was the desire of each of her girls.

"'The same coloured hair, and the same coloured eyes, but—not the same. Your mother is a lovely woman, a gentlewoman.'

"'And you mean I am not like her because I am not gentle? How could you know? I can be wild, but I have been meek enough here!'

"I knew I was like mother, and at the moment I was angry with this stranger for so putting me down. What could she see of my face in the dim light from those carriage lamps?

"'Yes,' said the lady; and here she put her hand out from the warm furs of her cloak, and laid it on mine.

"Then my hot anger went, and again I felt like crying. I pulled myself together; but, really, I could not get a flippant answer spoken, which at any other time my fiery nature would have had ready.

"Suddenly the even-paced, swift horses were pulled up.

"Where were we? All was dark. Certainly we were out of the town.

"To be exact, we were in amongst the country lanes of Hammersmith.

"Mrs. Wilson gave a scream, then strangled it in half-existence, then sidled down from her seat opposite on to my knees in abject terror.

"'Wilson,' said her mistress, coldly, 'bethink yourself.'

"'Footpads! Highwaymen!' she gasped.

"'In the beat of a watchman!' her mistress said, scornfully silencing her.



"Then the murkiness was lighted by the flare of torches, and I could see a carriage, with steaming horses, by our side, and ill-defined figures. I saw a watchman's box was facing us, and the 'Charley' himself was busying himself with a heavy port-manteau, which was being transferred from the carriage to our coach.

"Three gentlemen were the travellers. One a very old and decrepit, small man—rolled up and huddled in wraps, with even a woman's shawl round his throat and high over his ears—got inside; the others, two rollicking blades of grandsons, mounted aloft.

"Long before the old man was packed in his seat—it was literally packing—the carriage, which had brought the party up, had driven rapidly away.

"So night grew on. Not apace; but wearily and slowly. How cramped I was! How dead tired did I grow! How determinedly did I set myself to keep awake, and on my guard. You see, travelling then was beset with the dangers of an attack. Ay, we city girls were full of tales of how gentlemen, real gentlemen by birth, had taken to the road, and were cutting purses and terrifying women on all the King's highways.

"I wore a loose pocket by mother's good care, and in that were my treasures; but some certain loose cash father had given me for any needs by the way, was in a new purse of sister Pen's netting which was in my reticule. My reticule was on my arm. Was it likely that, even when I felt bowed down with sleep, that I should loose my hold of it? Not likely.

"What the hour was I knew not. Suddenly I woke. I had fought against sleep, but sleep had mastered me; and in the bewilderment of my wakening, I could not take up facts.

"I thought I saw two bright black eyes close to me.

"One movement, and I was quite awake, and remembered all.

"The protecting lady by my side slept; the sharp face of the maid facing her was curiously sharp in its sleep under the yellow gleam of the side-lamp; the bundled-up old man might be asleep or awake. He was a mummy; and the mummy's eyes were closed.

"For one moment I was in terror, under the foolish dream of those keen, black eyes.

"I felt for my reticule. It was safe on my knee, and I tucked it down more tightly between the lady and myself.

"So I awoke her.

"'And I to sleep!' she exclaimed. 'I never sleep travelling!'

"Then she awoke the maid, and bade her strike a match. They had, it seemed, a sensible tinder-box with them; so that, in case of need, they could get themselves a light.

"'See if everything under your charge is safe, Wilson,' the lady said.

"'Yes, my lady.'

"Then I guessed something of the rank of my friend.

"'But, my lady,' the woman said rather sharply, I suppose being wakened from her sleep made her forget her manners, 'the jewels went on Monday, you know, with the Paris boxes, when Sir Jasper and Sparkes went down.'

"'Do as I bid you.'

"The lady held the light carefully, and Wilson made her examination. She rather, nay, more than rather, upset the old gentleman, for he swore a good round oath at her, and shaded his eyes from the light. He lifted his hand for this and his wraps so falling away seemed to show a round, firm wrist, not the withered wrist so old a man might have been expected to have.

"Another oath was mumbled.

"In my terror, for such language frightened me, I glanced up at my lady friend. Lo! her brown eyes were alert and fixed as mine had ignorantly been on the uplifted wrist of the old man.

"'That will do—you can sleep on now.' As she spoke she extinguished the bit of wax candle, and I could feel, but not see, that she was carefully shutting up the tinder-box.

"'There is nothing to be frightened at, child, go to sleep. I shall sleep no more.' Like a mother she set my wraps round me, drew me to her, and I felt that she, too, was guarding my reticule.

"Could she have a suspicion that that old man, such a very old decrepit man he seemed, was not honest?

"I meant to keep awake, and on guard; but—I did not do it. I went to sleep.

"I knew nothing of the relays of horses; I never felt one change that they made. All the night stages passed for me in dreamless sleep, and the things that I next knew was that a cold, grey dawn was breaking. Far away dim hills lifted darkly under the pale sky, vague forms grew into clustering woodland, colourless from the pall of the slowly going night; darker masses suggested houses, one with

lights in windows was close by. Then, from out of the dim sky there came the chime of bells, the hour was struck from the soaring spire of Salisbury Cathedral.

"I was the sole occupant of the coach, and all the rest of the passengers seemed to make a crowd.

"Here, miss—wake !' Wilson was jogging my sleepy self and was cross.

"Then we had breakfast, my Lady Bellasis and I—it was then that I fully learnt her name—and, I was tired, but happy enough. I wondered afterwards at myself, but yet it came quite naturally then that I should be so at my ease with so great a lady. For, in my home, our society was that of City dames, and, as I have said before, in those days tradesfolk did not seek to mingle with the nobility.

"It was still but twilight when we re-entered the coach, for the rapid 'Quick-silver' would brook no tardiness in its passengers.

"I must have been more of a child than I would have liked to own, for I never thought that I must pay for my breakfast. It was the fact of a serving man bringing some silver change to my Lady Bellasis that made me see what I ought to do.

"Before I could speak, however, the dear lady said: 'It is settled. I have had it all put to my score, and you must be my guest for the sake of your mother's lovely face.'

"I did not know what to say. I felt independent, and yet I also had the right instinct that I must not ungraciously refuse what was so graciously offered to me.

"The journey went on.

"I knew not where we were. I looked out as the sun rose, beautifying the most beautiful country of hills and vales, of wood and water, and nestling hamlets. I know now that that most lovely part was the lovely vale of Honiton. How many times since have I seen it !

"Suddenly we heard strange bird cries. What bird was it? I, a Cockney, could not tell. I could not help noticing that Lady Bellasis was struck by the noises. I learnt afterwards that the sound was a signal.

"Very soon after we came to some cross roads, and the two youngsters, who were evidently rollicking men of fashion, ordered the coach to stop, and sprang down from the roof with the agility of cats. They came to the door, opened it in a masterful way, and called out after this fashion :

"Waken sharp, granddad! Here we

are at Poultney's corner. No sign of horse or man. Can you walk? Ay, you'll have to. We are not going to miss to-day's meet. Hurry up; Lascelles has got the valise.'

"A smothered oath was the answer, and with a magnified shiver, the old fellow rolled himself out of the coach and into the arms of the gay fellow who was looking after him.

"Walk !' was the word that followed the oath. 'Do I look like it?'

"Ha, ha, ha ! ha, ha, ha ! By Heaven, I don't think you do.'

"The guard banged the door, and we were off.

"Look after them, child,' Lady Bellasis ordered. 'Sharply, too. Your eyes are young; look at the old man most.'

"And what did I see as we swung round a bend of the road? Just this. The old sinner threw up his arms, slipped himself free of his wraps—he looked no more an old man. I saw no more except this—a horseman came tearing out of the road behind and drew rein against the other three.

"He was the bird who had given that strange cry.

"My tongue chattered this as quickly as my eyes saw it.

"What I guessed,' was my lady's cool word. 'Why did I sleep? We have had the pleasure of a ride with robbers; no doubt they knew I was coming this way, they did not know that my valuables were not coming with me, but had gone before.'

"Wilson shrieked, and for two minutes did not heed her mistress's scornful command for silence.

"And I? I did not even tremble. There must have been in me some innate passion for fighting.

"Those were his real eyes that I saw !' I cried. 'But my reticule is safe.'

"Open it, child. Was your purse in it?'

"Yes, my lady.'

"Look for it, then.'

"Can you believe it?—it was gone. How the horrid creature had taken it without my feeling his touch, I never could understand.

"And there I was without a penny.

"The November afternoon was beginning to grow grey when again we stopped. Exeter loomed nigh at hand; the Cathedral towers rose into the wintry sky; but at hand were a carriage and servants, and a tall man—a young man.

"'Jasper!' I heard Lady Bellasis cry. The young man was her son.

"I did feel dreary then—all alone for the rest of my journey.

"As the guard came to close the door, my lady came to me.

"'Poor, penniless child! you shall not go alone. I told your mother I would take care of you, so my son will mount and ride into Exeter with you, and will see that you safely meet your friends. Jasper, come and be introduced to the heroine of the "Quicksilver" coach.'

"I—a heroine? Was that because I had not shrieked when the waiting-woman had done so? My silence was no more than an instinct.

"Now let me hurry on. Again Sir Jasper, helping me out of the coach, called me the 'heroine' of the day; and his speech was to a big, cheery old gentleman, wearing a thick, furred overcoat, voluminous white neck-cloth, and, of course, the curly-brimmed hat of the day's fashion.

"That was my uncle, the doctor. Doctor Blackall, of Exeter, was a great man there, and known for miles around. I do not know how it was done, but Sir Jasper claimed acquaintance with him. Uncle, of course, saw so many people, and in his jolly way he laughed over it when we got home to his fine house in 'Dix's Fields'; but, as he put it, 'more folks know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows,' which was his way of saying that he could not remember of Sir Jasper Bellasis more than the name.

"The matter must explain itself.

"Sir Jasper called on aunt—mother's sister, she was—a few days after, and made himself monstrous agreeable; so that he was made welcome to the house for any day or hour he chose.

"I suppose he took to the young men, my cousins; he was there very often. Nay, all through the winter; for, coming from London, was I not bound to make a long visit? There was no ball of the city, or of the county, to which we went, where we did not find him.

"Girls will talk, you know; so the girls, my cousins, began to twit me with my courtly lover.

"I grew hot, and declared that he was no lover of mine.

"Ay, but he was; and, with the consent of his mother, too, for she had me over to her house at Worricombe, and made much of me for three whole days.

"Many a time have I spent weeks and

months at Worricombe Place since then; but, no visit has even been like that one. Ah, me!

"Can I describe Sir Jasper? No, scarcely. One shrinks from putting one's brightest thoughts into words, one's most heavenly dreams linger radiant in lands of glory unspeakable; so things are. He was a gentleman, he was a nobleman; there! I can say no more.

"Perfect? you say, satirically.

"Ah! no. He was hot-tempered; he was fiery against untruth, disloyalty, or deception.

"On the eve of Valentine's Day we, that is my cousins and I, were at a city ball given for some civic glorifying, and country folks were present as well as the good Exeter townspeople.

"Sir Jasper was there.

"He was my lover, I was sure. I will not tell you why I was sure—even an old woman does not tell these things. I knew that he had to go to London on the following day, for the House would be sitting, and he was a Member for Devon county. I knew that he would see father and mother; I knew, too, that, notwithstanding the calls of the House, or the dangers of the road—by-the-bye, I had forgotten to tell you that very soon after my journey down those three fellow-travellers of mine were pounced upon by the Devon constabulary, and were to be tried for their lives—notwithstanding all such perils Sir Jasper was coming down again in little more than a week.

"On Valentine's morning my two cousins and myself were alert, and as wild as girls could be. The unearthly hour at which we chose to rise!

"Both Deb and Nance had letters, bulky letters, with the addresses in any manner of quaint writing. You know the picture-valentines of laced paper, and satin ribbon, and little angels and cupids. What the girls had were handsome things, very handsome things of the kind.

"Mine was a long, narrow packet. I opened it. Lo! there was a box of French gloves—long grey gloves, and long lemon-colour gloves. Not so much unlike those you girls wear nowadays.

"I was just one huge, burning blush. Of course I knew who had sent them. Had not Sir Jasper talked about my hand; talked nonsense very likely, but—he knew the size of it.

"'You'll wear those grey ones to-morrow night with your pink frock, Bridget,' Nance said.

"Shall I?"

"They'll look lovely."

"There was no doubt of that; but I had a feeling that the wearing should be postponed until I could see the giver and thank him."

"Won't my white ones be clean enough?" I said; and I presently folded up my gloves. I have looked at them many a time since.

"The girls were at once on the 'qui vive' to get some like gloves for themselves. They ransacked every Exeter shop, but unsuccessfully. However, they came home radiant."

"They had met Mrs. Wilson, shopping for my lady, and from her had learnt the way of procuring the things. The woman was not sour to them as she was to me. She said she would willingly see about getting them sent from Paris. She had orders to write that very day to Paris for Lady Bellasis."

"Sir Jasper was back. Sir Jasper had been met by uncle strolling under the elms of the Northernhay Walk. They had chatted, and—there was a funny look on uncle's face as he, in his joking way, made as though all his remarks were for my benefit."

"I linger in my story, as if in my old age I could bring back that day, and forget the night that followed it!"

"There was a climax to our winter's gaiety that night in the dance the Squire gave at Wavertree Hall in honour of the coming of age of his son. All the world was going; all the world donned their very best ball-dresses. Mine was a new one from London which mother had sent down to me because I had literally worn-out all my stock. It was white satin, and I was white from tip to toe. One thing made me woefully disappointed, for I wished to wear the gloves, the grey gloves, and the thing was quite impossible with my white satin dress. Mother had sent gloves and all—gloves trimmed with swansdown to roll over my elbow."

"Sir Jasper and the Worricombe party were late. He watched me through a whole quadrille before he could speak to me, too."

"When he did speak, I missed something."

"Was it——?" I began hotly to thank him. "Yes, it was you who sent——"

"But he was talking to the Squire. Funny for him to leave me for the Squire."

"Presently—I thought my opportunity

never would come—I was alone in an alcove, and Sir Jasper, bringing in his partner, had at the same moment to relinquish her to his successor for a new dance. I began again:

"Do come and speak to me," I said, braving all shyness. "I must thank you; I want to thank you very much——"

"Then I saw Sir Jasper was angry."

"A worthless gift," at last he said.

"Worthless! They are lovely!"

"Too lovely to be worn."

"Mother ordered me to wear these with my new dress; if I had had my——"

"Not too lovely to be given away at the first opportunity!" He was so angry that he never heard what I was saying.

"Given away?" I gasped. And being hot and proud, I know my back stiffened and my head lifted haughtily.

"Your cousins——" he could say no more, being here mastered by his jealous fury.

"Then I understood. Deb and Nance did wear gloves exactly like those of my Valentine. I laughed—yes, laughed. But my laugh was not one of pleasure, but of anger as great in my foolish fashion as ever his anger was. Should he—he, my lover, tax me with meanness of that sort? I would not answer such an accusation!"

"My cheeks burnt, and I said haughtily, 'If that is your belief, believe it to the end of time!'"

"I was told what I should see, and now I see I must believe"—he was cooling—"I do believe!" A flash of the cooling anger made him add: "Confess. I do not like to be deceived; but, I dare say you meant nothing so ugly as deception." He put out his hand as if he would make friends.

"Then do not tax me with it! You had better go to your informant for more news. I confess nothing—my actions are what I choose them to be! You may believe just whatever you like about me. Go to my cousins! they will tell you how I pressed my worthless gift upon them!" Having delivered my furious self of this tirade, I walked out of the alcove and stood by aunt's side.

"In a moment my hand was claimed for the next dance."

"Sir Jasper disappeared, and I was too angry to care."

"Ah, me! I cared afterwards. Days and days passed and I never saw him."

"The county was astounded in a week or two after by the announcement of the



marriage, by special license, of Sir Jasper Bellasis with a Miss Sylvia Lewis, a banker's daughter, of London.

"Shall I end there, or shall I tell you more? I think I must tell you all.

"I learnt it afterwards, two years afterwards.

"Wilson, the waiting-woman, was attacked by small-pox—that then frightful scourge—and died. Just before her death, she called for her mistress, and Lady Bellasis, with her noble courage, went, believing the woman her faithful servant. Remorse was terrifying Mrs. Wilson; she had gained the ear of Sir Jasper, too kind, too condescending to his mother's old tire-woman, and she it was who, under the guise of a joke, told him of my giving away his gift.

"I do not know how men can believe such stories; they must be weak. A woman would never have listened for one moment.

"A year after, a little daughter was born to Sir Jasper, and the mother died. Sir Jasper had grown wild and reckless, and careless of his wife. Poor girl! I was sorry for her.

"The poor little baby-girl went to Lady Bellasis. When I saw the child she was a year old; for I did, as soon as that, go down to my dear old friend. With her I spent the happiest part of my youth.

"You will think it strange that I, so proud, should go to stay at Worricombe. My pride was dead. All seemed dead to me in those days, but my love and that—poor, neglected young Lady Bellasis!—I could own, and did own, and for ever and ever own!

"Sir Jasper went to the wars, and died fighting as a volunteer in the service of a foreign country, just about the time his wife died.

"It was months before the news reached England.

"When Lady Bellasis knew it she sent for me. The dear old lady was loyal to her son's wife; but I knew her mother's love was mine. She showed me Sir Jasper's will—I will not say what he there said of me. It was dated the very day after Wilson's confession, and—well! he asked me to forgive him. He left me his ring—he left me his love.

"My heart would not say that in this he was disloyal—the sin he would most have abhorred—to his wife, my heart could not judge. Poor young thing, too! she was dead.

"Why did he marry at all? Heaven

only knows! Who can ever tell what a wild and reckless man will do?

"I helped to bring up little Lucy Bellasis; she married very young, too young. Her son you know—he is a fine man, the very image of Sir Jasper, his grandfather.

"He is Lewis James.

"Bel, my child," Aunt Bridget's hand fell lovingly on the brown head by her knee, "you'll wear your Valentine gloves next Sunday. He will be here."

Bel did so. And, now that she is Lewis James's wife, she laughingly tells Aunt Bridget that history does not always repeat itself.

## THE ROYAL HOUSE OF STUART.

EXHIBITIONS such as that now open at the New Gallery in Regent Street of the "Royal House of Stuart," are among the pleasantest methods by which history is brought home to us; they share with the historical novel and the historical play the gift of making straight the paths of learning. Not that, to be strictly accurate, any of the three can be said so much actually to increase our knowledge of any given period or nationality; or to "fix"—if we may borrow a term from the nomenclature of photography—permanently on the retina of the memory visages and recollections which would without them prove short-lived and evanescent. Children are not the only students who prove the apter for the aid of "illustrations," whether those illustrations take the form of plays, of novels, or, as in the case of this Exhibition, of portraits, coins, medals, relics, and the like; for which reason many children of a larger growth will feel their knowledge of the "Royal House of Stuart" confirmed and strengthened by a visit to the New Gallery.

The early history of Scotland is not, we suspect, much studied nowadays in the schoolroom, or elsewhere; but there are many who, in the days when the influence of Walter Scott was potent throughout the land, spent happy and not unprofitable hours over "The Tales of a Grandfather." And in such the Stuart Exhibition will wake from long slumbers many a memory of those childish studies.

Those portraits of the early Stuart Kings—apocryphal, no doubt, for no greater antiquity is claimed for them than the reign of Charles the First, but bearing,

at any rate, a far greater semblance of reality than the absurd collection at Holyrood, which was painted a generation later!—how thickly, as one gazes at them, come the recollections of the earlier monarchs of the ill-starred race as told to children's ears by the great Wizard of the North; the King against whose assassins a woman's arm vainly barred the door; the King who was killed by the bursting of a cannon; the King poniarded by one in priest's garb as he fled from the field of defeat; the King who fell at Flodden; the King who said, "It came with a lass, and it will go with a lass," and died—not the first or the last of his family who did so—of a broken heart. What a heritage of woe seemed the Crown of Scotland when set upon the brow of a Stuart!

By this time we have exchanged the apocryphal for the authentic. The monarch vanquished at Flodden was the brother-in-law of Henry the Eighth; and of the portraits of him here, one lent by the Marquess of Lothian is by Holbein, who represents him of more ascetic an appearance than one has been used to imagine the lover of the Lady Heron of Ford. Already we begin to distinguish, especially in James the Fifth, the aquiline nose, which remained to the end a distinguishing mark of the Stuart family. Of Mary Queen of Scots the portraits are numerous, and there is among them the usual contradiction. There are likenesses of Francis the Second of France, and of Darnley, but of her third husband, Bothwell, there is none, which is to be regretted on artistic, as well as on historical, grounds; for besides the important influence which Bothwell exercised on his times, and especially on the fortunes of Mary, he must have been a man of striking physical attributes; and the absence of his portrait from these walls is therefore doubly to be deplored. Surely it would not have been impossible, among the many collections whose riches were available for the purposes of this Exhibition, to discover the counterfeit presentment of James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell.

We come to a generation later. The Stuart sits on the throne of England; the destinies of his race, for good or ill, are higher, his responsibilities weightier; and as the history of the house takes, with its newly-added dignities, a wider scope, we find the executive of the New Gallery confronted with the question how far the collection shall extend beyond the limits of the

actual Stuart family and those with whom the members of the family intermarried. To admit all who figured in the history of the house would be clearly impossible. That history has become the history of England, if not of Europe; and considerations of space would warn the committee not to attempt a task beyond their powers. On the other hand, to exclude all except the Royal race itself, would have barred many, without whom no collection, commemorating the Stuarts and their cause, would be complete. To admit memorials of their adversaries would, on such an occasion as this, be clearly out of the question; but no record of the time of Charles the First would be complete which took no account of Strafford and Laud, of Juxon and Ashburnham, the "crowning mercy"—though in the Royalist company, in which we here find ourselves, that was an ill-chosen phrase to quote—of Worcester fight, and the Restoration must be illustrated by Mrs. Jane Lane and George Monk, while the story of Charles Edward would be but half told without the portraits and relics of Flora Macdonald, which are among the most interesting objects in the New Gallery.

So far, so good. The task of selection has doubtless been a difficult one, and, on the whole, has been well accomplished; but there are some names which we are surprised to miss from the catalogue. Granting that a mere participation in the general history of the times should not be considered a qualification for admission here, there are many whose personal connection with the fortunes of the Royal house should have secured them a place—supposing, which it is hard to doubt, that portraits of all of them exist—who are nevertheless "conspicuous by their absence."

There could be no difficulty in obtaining the portraits of Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon; the historian of one King, the father-in-law of another, and the grandfather of two Queens of the Stuart dynasty; or of Archibald Campbell, Earl of Argyle, one of its most devoted adherents.

The reign of James the Second is but insufficiently illustrated without Father Petre, his Jesuit confessor; and Barillon, the French Ambassador to the Court of Saint James's. But these are portraits which it might not be so easy to obtain.

Again, the rising of 1715 is incompletely set before us, without John Erskine, Earl of Mar, who commanded, at that time, the Scottish force of the Prince, whom the catalogue styles, in true Jacobite fashion,

James the Third and James the Eighth ; and we confess a sincere regret for the absence of the Lady Nithisdale, whose successful rescue of her husband from the Tower forms one of the most romantic episodes in annals teeming with romance, and an episode the more attractive for its truth.

Are there no descendants now living of the "Seven Men of Moidart;" of Cameron of Lochiel ; of Macleod, and others whose devotion shed a lustre on the last effort of the ill-fated house for its lost crown, who could contribute their ancestors' pictures to render this collection more thoroughly representative of the cause ?

It is in no churlish spirit that we note these omissions, which may, in many cases, have been unavoidable ; but with the frank admission that so much has been admirably accomplished, that we grudge falling short of absolute perfection.

It is not now our province to examine this interesting collection in detail ; but we cannot leave it without referring to two portraits of the last two Princes of the Stuart race by whom any active effort was made to regain the throne of their ancestors.

Let the visitor turn his steps to No. 167, lent by the Trustees of Blair's College, Aberdeen, representing Prince James Francis Edward (King James the Third and Eighth) as a doughty warrior, clad in complete armour. The blue ribbon falls over his breast, the red folds of his cloak are majestically draped around his figure, the very curls of his ample-powdered wig inspire awe ; and he points with his truncheon to an open map with an air that breathes assurance of victory. Does he not appear as absolute an embodiment of command and success as his good cousin and patron, Ludovicus Magnus, of Versailles, himself ? What a satire is this presentment on history and hard facts ! What a contrast between this conquering hero and the leader, devoid of cheerfulness and vigour, whose inopportune presence in Scotland in 1715 served only to depress and hamper his adherents !

Lest, therefore, this picture should tempt us to dwell on the ludicrous side of the Stuart cause, turn to the small canvas lent by Mr. Blayney R. Townley Balfour, hanging hard by (No. 158), which depicts Prince Charles Edward (Charles the Third) as an old man ; and we recognise to the full the terrible pathos of the expiring days of the Jacobite hopes. The Prince, terribly changed from the Bonnie Prince Charlie of the '45, still more changed from the

bright boy whose childish features beam on us from a neighbouring frame, stricken with years, with defeats, and deferred hopes, which age men as mere years will never do, bears in his features the indelible marks of dissipation and self-indulgence.

The eyes and brow retain much of the beauty of his youth ; but the feeble mouth, with its pendulous, flaccid lips, tell too truly the story of his long and miserable exile. Verily, there is none even among the bitterest enemies of his race, if, indeed, any such now exist, but can afford the sincerest pity for him, who now lies in the great Cathedral of Saint Peter, beneath the tomb raised to his memory by a Prince of the House of Brunswick.

No race of Kings, it is true, had a larger share of human faults and frailties than the House of Stuart ; but their history was for nearly five centuries the history of two great nations, which, under their sceptre, became one. They inspired their adherents with a courage and devotion which gibbet and axe were powerless to tame ; and their memory will continue green in chronicle, in ballad, and in romance, as long as our language is spoken.

For the sake of uniformity we have adopted, though we are far from endorsing, the orthography of the Committee, and spell the Royal name in the French fashion, "Stuart." The etymology of the word, which is derived, as everybody knows, from the hereditary office of Great Steward of Scotland, held by Walter Stewart (who by his marriage with Princess Marjory, daughter and heiress of King Robert Bruce, founded the Royal line) and, it is said, by the seven generations of his family immediately preceding him ; the example of Barbour Pardon and others of the old Scottish chroniclers ; the universal custom of the Royal house and their subjects for upwards of two hundred years after the foundation of the dynasty, all favour "Stewart" as the correct form of the name. It was not until Mary's residence in Paris, as bride-elect, and afterwards as Queen of Francis the Second, that the French, after their national wont, gallicised the word to suit their own alphabet and accent, in much the same fashion as that in which nearly three centuries later they transformed the patronymic of Napoleon from Buonaparte (the proper Italian form), to Bonaparte, or as the names of our towns appear in such altered guise as "Edimbourg" and Cantorbéry. Orthographical errors of this kind are intelligible, if not

defensible on the part of the foreigner ; but it is certainly strange to find the native endorsing them, and, as in this case, practically banishing the original form of spelling from the language in favour of a corruption of alien source.

#### BELOW BRIDGE.

IT is well that the Monument stands where it did, although there have been rumours—happily unfounded—that even the Monument was coming down, not of human malice, but by reason of its old constitution, undermined by tunnels and excavations, and shaken by passing trains. But about the Monument, within the last few years, everything is changed ; and yet not everything, for the vista of Fish Street Hill, steeply sloping to the river, still remains as a bit of old London, with the shapely tower and pillars of Saint Magnus, and the clock hanging out like a sign, and a narrow winding contour which suggests the way to old London Bridge—the old bridge with its overhanging houses, and chapels, and gateways, and traitors' heads, perhaps, bristling at the top.

Among the fruit merchants and the fish merchants traffic is in full swing. The lanes are encumbered with carts and waggons loaded, or loading, with cases of oranges, of lemons, of dried fruits, and there is a fragrance in the air of the orange-groves of Spain, mixed with a West Indian pine-apple flavour, dashed with an occasional whiff from the Spice Islands. And then there is a briny, fishy, kippered tornado in Billingsgate, where the approaches are still choked with fish carts and railway waggons, although it is just high noon. But coming out upon Tower Hill everything is quiet and still. The grand old fortress lies there in perfect peace and repose—like an old lion, toothless, and weary with the burden of its years, with battlement over battlement, tower upon tower, roofs and chimneys peering forth, windows and flowers smiling out from ancient prison holds ; and above all these the turrets of the White Tower of old legends and chronicles,

With many a foul and midnight murder fed.

A terrible shaggy old lion is this, before which we pass so unconcernedly ; but one which made the boldest tremble in times gone by.

And here, where we stand on Tower

Hill, how many a curious crowd has gathered to see the end of some great noble or fine gentleman—a crowd heaped together, as one of the last to suffer here said, with a fine scorn : "Like a lot of rotten oranges." There is the scaffold, draped with black, and in the midst of it all can we not hear the dull thud of the axe ? It is but the loud clapping-to of the doors of a hansom, by some merchant of the period—or it may be that he is a broker or shipping agent—on his way to the station surrounded with fish baskets and game baskets, and parcels of toys. Is not Christmas at hand, and every one hurrying away from the City—Mercator to his villa in Surrey ; Mercator's head clerk to his dwelling in Camden Town ; and the rest to Islington, or Holloway, or Hammersmith, or where they please ; but no one is coming our way, which is towards Wapping.

It was Dr. Samuel Johnson who, expatiating upon the strange worlds that existed all unknown under people's very noses, advised his friends to go and explore Wapping. They went, but were disappointed ; there was nothing to be seen. The docks had not then come into existence ; but there were tiers of ships in the Pool, lighters and barges loading or unloading cargo, with wherries shooting to and fro, and watermen crowding about the stairs and shouting eagerly for custom. At the present day, when the grey bastions of the Tower are lost sight of, the neighbourhood appears quiet and gloomy enough ; the streets enclosed between high dock walls, and only the rumble of a loaded waggon, and the footsteps of a few chance passengers, to break the silence.

Here is Nightingale Lane, a street without houses, and framed in huge walls, so that its name might have been given it in irony ; but there were pleasant fields and copses here once upon a time, and it is said that Charles the First once killed a stag in this very Nightingale Lane, having followed the poor beast all the way from Wanstead in Essex. But then, no doubt, the neighbourhood was thickly populated ; for hereabouts humble dwellings had sprung up, tenanted by the poorest of refugees and foreigners, who, landing from ships in the river, here settled for want of means to go further. And with these were interspersed a considerable number of people connected more or less closely with ships and sailors. In the midst rose the ancient church and



hospital of Saint Katherine, which had escaped the general wreck of the Reformation. For its sisters were for the most part ladies of gentle blood, and the hospital itself was under the direct patronage of the Crown, the appointment of the Superior of the convent being in the gift of the Queen Consort for the time being—the only piece of patronage she possessed in virtue of her office. In the church were buried many of high degree who had been benefactors to the hospital; and there was a fine altar tomb to the memory of John Holland, Duke of Exeter, Admiral of England, Ireland, and Aquitaine, a grandson of Joan, the Fair Maid of Kent. And thus the place remained with little alteration till the beginning of the present century, when a company was formed to excavate a great dock upon the site.

Hence arose Saint Katherine's Docks, which caused the demolition of a thickly populated quarter with a population of over eleven thousand souls, chiefly of the humblest and poorest, who were driven to seek shelter elsewhere, and spread themselves over the regions of Whitechapel and Stepney. And old Saint Katherine's was also destroyed, but the hospital itself was a gainer, in a worldly sense, anyhow, and removed with its relics, and with some of its tombs, notably that of the Duke of Exeter, to more airy and commodious lodgings by Regent's Park, where it still flourishes. The general account is, that the whole district was laid waste to make room for the docks; but there is one street dovetailed among docks and warehouses, leading out of Nightingale Lane, Burt Street, which bears a cachet of greater antiquity than of the present century, and, perhaps, it was outside the scope of the general demolition.

Here and there opens out a waterway, broad and shining, with swing-bridges and huge lock gates, and beyond is a stretch of placid water where a few steamers are drawn up against the dockside. But within the compass of the dock walls everything is quiet enough. It is like a bit of ancient history to read of the life, and bustle, and movement of the docks when these "home circuit" docks are alluded to. At times, indeed, when Continental steamers arrive and depart from the wharves in the river, or the Irish, or Scotch, or English tourist boats, the place is all alive with cabs and people of all kinds, and of every nationality. And, indeed, there is no lack of business and

movement all along the opened wharves, where lighters hang together in long strings, and cranes and lifts are whirling away merrily. But the fleets of sailing ships, coasters and foreign traders, whose various rigs and colours, with their miscellaneous cargoes, once made these docks so busy and gay; all these, or the greater part of them, anyhow, have ceased to exist. Perhaps a turn of the wheel may, one day, bring back another burst of prosperity to these oldest of London's docks. Other great cities are trying to bring our great modern steamers to their very doors. Manchester, for instance, with its Ship Canal; and there is London's sister and once rival Rouen, which is constantly striving to improve the navigation of the Seine, so as to bring the full tide of commerce to its quays. Or, again, there is the example of Glasgow, with a river far inferior in volume to the Thames at London Bridge, but which berths the great Atlantic steamers at its quays. London, on the other hand, thrusts its docks and harbours as far away as possible, seemingly anxious to create a rival at the mouth of its own river. There are signs, however, that this process has gone far enough, and some day, perhaps, we may be able to walk on board our steamers, just below London Bridge, for America, India, or Australia.

But we are in Wapping now; that last drawbridge across the inlet to London Dock, brought us into Wapping High Street. Time was when all hereabouts was a great wash—a swamp. It was Wapping in the Wose, with a strip of foreshore often covered by the tide, and a watery waste behind, where snipe and aquatic birds resorted in great numbers. The strip of foreshore remains as Wapping High Street, and the inland part was reclaimed by an ingenious device characteristic of the age—Wapping began to spring from the ooze about A.D. 1571—and subsequent centuries. The bank of the river was let out to enterprising settlers in building lots; and it was argued that when these gentry—who were presumably ignorant of the choicer characteristics of the neighbourhood—had built themselves houses, and generally made themselves comfortable, they would be obliged to raise and keep in repair the river-bank, to save themselves and their belongings from destruction. And thus it proved; and much good resulted to the far-seeing lords of the manor.

But there were docks and wharves even then; and famous among the former was Execution Dock, which may have occupied any of these openings that run down to the river, where pirates were hung, the gallows being erected at low-water mark, and the bodies left hanging till three tides had overflowed them.

Some might consider High Street, Wapping, a little dull. It is not altogether what it used to be, when fiddles might be heard in every public-house, and Jack ashore might be seen dancing a hornpipe in the inn-parlour, or going through a reel with Moll or Sue in the fairway. There are public-houses still, but there are more soldiers than sailors to be found within. Tom Atkins of the Coldstreams and Bill Fuse of the Artillery are enjoying their moments of liberty after their morning parade in the Tower, and squaring their elbows as they bring the mantling cups to their lips with a flourish, as if in salute from Mars to Bacchus. Longshore men, too, are lounging in the bar, and stray watermen grumbling about the hard times. Such shops as there are along the way are devoted to ships'-chandlers and butchers, also of the nautical persuasion. And here you may see a stout and rosy west-country captain, whose steamer lies at the wharf hard by, who is making provision for his Christmas dinner, which he will eat somewhere off the Longship rocks as he beats round the Cape of Storms for Cardiff.

The river side of Wapping High Street is lined with tall warehouses mostly, through the doors of which can be seen a patch of bright water, with black and red funnels rising above the landing-stage, and a glimpse of the opposite shore, with dark, ragged buildings beyond. But a sense of the pathetic comes across the mind as a painted board appears over a narrow entry, with the inscription, faded with wind and weather, "Wapping Old Stairs." And down this narrow entry let us go, past the snug corner public-house, where more soldiers and more longshore men are dimly outlined through frosted glass, and along the narrow, paved causeway, which ends in a little landing-place, from which a steep flight of stone steps leads down, not to the water just now—for the tide is down, down to the very bottom of Father Thames's fluvial boots—but to the gravelled bed of the mighty stream sprinkled with all kinds of flotsam and jetsam. A great red funnel looms out of the water in front, and boats

and barges lie aground on each side. And these are "Wapping Old Stairs."

Where the pathos comes in, it is not easy to see; and yet it does somehow come in. Is it with Molly, who had been so faithful and true

Since last time we parted at Wapping Old Stairs, or is it that this quiet, almost solemn nook—for thus it appears at the moment—represents all the vanished scenes, romantic, melodramatic, or what you will; but any how, our ideal of the old, seafaring life, from the days of Drake and Frobisher to those of "Nelson of the Nile," or even down to old Charley Napier's time, as he sailed with the gale among his stout three-deckers for the Baltic? Here came Jack ashore, cautiously perhaps, for there might be a press-gang lurking round the corner, or uproariously otherwise, with his prize money in his pocket, and welcomed by all the lasses; and hence he took boat for his ship—His Majesty's frigate "Arethusa," that had taken her guns and stores on board, and was expected to drop down with the tide.

Looking over the scene is a projecting bay window from the adjoining tavern, with the backs of chairs visible as if arranged for a harmonic meeting. And what an ideal meeting might be held in such a locale, say some moonlight night when the tide is gently lapping against the stairs, with Charles Dibdin in the chair, and Incedon as chief performer, and so we might hear again the sweet refrain of "Wapping Old Stairs" and "Tom Bowling."

And with Wapping Old Stairs we have Wapping old church on the other side of the way, very quiet and old-fashioned, where pig-tailed Admirals and half-pay Lieutenants of Roderick Random's time may have worshipped. And here they may lie buried, in this green little nook, with the grey weather-worn headstones; a nook which must be pleasant enough in the summer time when there are leaves upon the bushes that scramble over the tomb. Boys and girls, too, make the walls echo with cheerful shouts, and over the school-house porch a couple of quaint figures, male and female, like those of a Dutch weather-glass, give signs of some beneficent endowment of old times.

Judged by the length of its High Street, Wapping should be a mighty place. It is not so really, for it is so elbowed on one side by the docks, and shut in on the other by the river, that it might be mathematically

defined as length without breadth. And yet there is something about Wapping that clings to human affections. There are old people who were born there, and who have hardly ever been out of it, and look upon Fleet Street and the Strand quite as foreign parts. And to be a butcher in Wapping is almost equal to being a baronet of the United Kingdom out of it, and there are not many true sons of Wapping who would choose the one position before the other, and it is possible to imagine that, after passing long years abroad, somebody's thoughts might turn fondly to a certain corner public-house. That was the case, anyhow, with a certain young man, who afterwards became connected with a famous peerage case; for this young fellow, who had been among the sailors of Wapping when a boy, and afterwards kidnapped and sent off to the plantations, turned out to be the heir to the earldom of Anglesey, and yet loved better than anything else the snug parlour of the "Yorkshire Grey," at Wapping. And a great advantage that Wapping High Street has over most other High Streets is, that when you are tired of walking—and it is possible to get very tired of the sloppy pavement and granite sets of that endless street—and there are no omnibuses or cabs to be met with, still you can take a boat.

Even now, a hail from Wapping Old, or Wapping New Stairs for "first pair of oars" might bring some serviceable wherry and a couple of grizzled watermen to the scene. But the steamboat pier is handier, and this year the boats are running all the winter through, weather permitting. And bright and brisk is the river, the tide coming freshly in, and floating argosies coming along at full pelt. Here the jolly little trading brigs trimming their gallant sails to the breeze; there the floating haystacks, with red sails flapping above and bellying to the wind. Big steamers come snorting along, and tugs with long strings of barges and lighters; wind and water and dashes of moist sea-drift, and gleams of sunshine from the cloudy sky, all give life and freshness to the scene, while a wreck-barge, with a green flag fluttering, gives a reminder of the voyage's perils; and there is Greenwich Hospital shining out over the rough and foaming tide. But our voyage ends at Limehouse, and here are more docks sprinkled with shipping, and a curious tumbledown quarter, half nautical and half slummy.

But the brightness of Limehouse is concentrated in a queer little winding street called Three Colts Street, where the shops are as gay as they can be made, the butchers with their pieces, and the drapers flaunting all kinds of bright-coloured things, and the general shop all aglow with penny toys and brilliant knick-knacks. A little hop-o'-my-thumb in a scarlet cap makes more noise than anybody, "Here, come along, who'll buy? here you are, the cheapest in the 'ole world." And so the fair goes on, while slatternly women, with greasy shawls over their heads, cheapen the joints, and bold sailors' lasses stare out from under their fringes of thick brown hair. And from all this bustle it is not a step to the quiet of Limehouse Churchyard, all open now, with seats, and shrubs, and solemn tombs among the grass plots. And beyond that are the trams rolling away towards the City through all the traffic and the bustle of the Commercial Road.

## A MAN'S FRIENDS.

A STORY IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

By B. DEMPSTER.

*Author of "Mrs. Silas B. Buxthorp," "No," etc. etc.*

### PART I.

#### CHAPTER III.

THAT same afternoon, at an unusually early hour for Jenkins, who lived only for work, he left his chambers in Lincoln's Inn, where he practised as a solicitor, and hailing a hansom, gave the address of a street in the East End.

Lawyers' business takes them to strange spots; but it could hardly have taken any one to a less inviting place, this hot afternoon, than Bolton's Rents. It was a dark, narrow alley, leading out of a great thoroughfare, and opening at the other end into a small flagged court, shut in on all sides, except by that narrow opening, by tall, dilapidated houses. The air was stifling and sickly with that indescribable odour which rises from places inhabited for generations by poverty-stricken humanity. It was full of the shrill cries of the children, who swarmed in every doorway, and played those pitiful fragments of games, handed down from a distant past of happier and healthier things, to these little waifs of a great city's gutters.

Picking his way through the ragged, sharp-eyed, old-faced babies, the lawyer

reached a house, the door of which, after the fashion of the other houses that hot afternoon, stood wide open. He entered and mounted the dirty, broken stairs. The paper on the walls was black with smoke and dirt, torn off here and there, exposing lath and plaster which, themselves, in many places had suffered from the wear and tear of the rough, overcrowded, order-indifferent life, passing ceaselessly up and down the stairs.

But when he reached the last flight of all—leading to the garret—matters improved. This flight was scrubbed scrupulously clean. The walls had been patched with strange and varied papers. There were even one or two highly-coloured prints of painful perspective, adorning the wall which faced one of the doors opening on the tiny landing. The lawyer stopped for a moment to gaze, with solemn interest, at the most astounding of them all. It was a problem, which not even his subtle wit could solve, how any persons with sane reason, could invest their money in such a production. This picture, however, covered a large, unsightly blotch in the wall, so it had its uses.

The sound of a woman's voice, breaking into a snatch of song beyond the door behind him, made him turn as if faintly startled. He listened for a second, then knocked at the door. It was opened immediately. He knew, having been there once or twice before, that if the visitor were the Queen herself, the room would be ready to receive her. A tall, slender woman in the doorway, smiled him a pleased greeting.

It was a tiny little room, and the tall lawyer had to bend his head as he crossed the threshold. Up here, near the roof, the heat was more intense; but it had this advantage, that through the little dormer window, the blue sky could be seen, and the shrill voices of the children were softened by the distance. The room was exquisitely clean; the walls, a very patch-work of odds and ends of paper, which hid, as on the staircase, ugly tears and holes, while the same kind of pictorial decorations adorned them. There was scarcely any furniture: a bed, consisting of a mattress, neatly covered in the daytime with a coloured quilt; a small deal table, on which stood at the present moment a cup and teapot, with a loaf and a little pot of treacle. There was a chair, by which lay the work she had just laid down, and by which she earned that daily bread. A

small cupboard faced the door. There were only two signs that betrayed anything but the barest necessity. One was a bowl of lovely roses set on the table, and the other the spirit-lamp with which she had just made her tea.

"You see," she said, with a bright smile, as her visitor took the chair, "I make good use of your kind present. And the roses you sent this morning—oh, the roses!"

"I am glad you liked them; they are just blooming themselves to death in the garden," he said, wondering if she would have had any tea at all this afternoon but for his gift of the lamp, which he had accompanied by a store of spirits enough to last for months.

He rather thought not, as the last time he had come, he had found her drinking water, apparently because there was no fire to boil the kettle. She brought out another cup from the cupboard.

"May I give you some tea?" she said, in the sweet self-possessed tone of a well-bred woman, and which was one of the things that always astonished him so in her, for she must have been still a child, when circumstances cast her adrift from the society to which by birth she belonged, and left her to earn her own bread with the working classes. "But," she added, with a shadow of dismayed regret, "I have no butter; and—perhaps you don't like treacle?"

Jenkins hastily glanced at the pot, repressing a shudder. He had never tasted treacle since he was a boy, and felt he was now too old to begin again. But he took the tea with a curious feeling, which might almost have been pleasure, that he could accept this hospitality from her. There was no other chair, so she sat down on a box near the window to drink hers.

"I saw Maria, yesterday," she said, flushing, as she always did when moved by any feeling, "and she told me how good you—"

"Oh, please, Miss Day, don't mention it. You see, I always feel that I was the cause of her accident."

A fortnight before, when driving in a hansom, the horse had bolted, and knocked down one of the two girls, crossing the road at the time. The girl, who was very badly hurt, was a friend of this Phemie Day's, and shared her room. As Jenkins jumped out from the wreckage of the cab, which was smashed to pieces a few



yards further down the road, he recognised, bending over the senseless figure in the road, the woman of whose existence he had become aware a week previously. She, of course, knew nothing of him, nor of how he had been watching her during the last week, and only was intensely grateful for his kindness then, and since, to her poor little friend, now lying in the hospital.

Quite a friendly acquaintanceship had risen between them; and partly through this, and partly through his argument that it would add to her sick friend's future comfort, when she would be well enough to come home, Phemie had accepted his present of the means for making the tea, which was her only luxury.

They sat now talking a little of Maria, and of her anxiety to get home again, to help to earn the daily bread, and pay the rent; and then on to the labour these latter facts entailed. He looked at this woman as she sat there in a graceful, though rather weary attitude, the warm sunlight bringing out tints he had never noticed in her hair before, and shining in her eyes; and he saw how shapely were her arms and bust, how beautiful the lines of her throat and head. With good food and sufficient, with rest and freedom from anxiety, the contour would fill out, the flesh grow white and firm; the lips, too hard and set now, grow softer, as the smiles came oftener. It was an anomaly that struck and stirred even him—who was to benefit so largely by it—that this woman, heiress to thousands, should not have sufficient to eat. His eyes glanced restlessly away from hers to the wall before him; but Daniel, with a red face, glowering at him from a group of in-offensive, but copper-coloured lions, made him wince.

"You don't like those pictures," she said hastily; "but Maria likes them. They belonged to her father; and I cannot hurt her feelings by saying that I don't."

"You don't like them then?" with relief, and then forgetting the impertinence of the question in his anxiety to know why she was so different to her surroundings, "why don't you like them?"

She flushed warmly and then laughed.

"Perhaps—because I have been taught differently."

"You would have disliked them without lessons," he said, abruptly; "you could not like anything that was crude, and ugly, and common."

She did not answer his remark; but it

seemed to have pained her in some way, for her brows contracted, and her mouth grew hard.

"Would not you like to be rich?" he asked, obeying an impulse for the first time for years.

"Rich!" The colour mantled to her face, and her eyes grew bright and eager. "Oh, yes; I would love to be rich. Life must be so beautiful to the rich!"

"They don't always think so," drily, a most unreasonable disappointment stirring him. Unreasonable, because the getting rich had been the sole creed by which he guided his own life. And then he was suddenly ashamed, for he saw that her eyes had softened with unshed tears, and he, sceptic as he was, felt certain that it was not for herself that she wished to be rich. "It would be so good for—Maria," he said thoughtfully.

"Oh, yes—for Maria, and for others," with a wistful, far-off look in her eyes. "And for me, too—I should like to be rich." And then she glanced at the work on the floor. He understood that he must not keep her idle any longer. He rose and shook hands. "Thank you for coming," she said simply. But her eyes said a great deal more, and he went away curiously satisfied.

#### CHAPTER IV.

THREE weeks went by, filled with the usual routine of the season's gaieties and Parliamentary business. Lethbridge combined both, with the marvellous capacity for enjoying himself, and working hard, which his splendid strength, mental and physical, gave him. But men began to say that he was knocking himself up. His face was looking thin and haggard. He was not himself in the House, and in society he seemed to be growing absent-minded. His friends remonstrated, and the Duke of Castleton meeting him one night at a large reception, advised him strongly, as if he felt a personal interest in the matter, to take a long rest when Parliament closed. His daughter also, that same evening, took him to task. The Lady Winifred Dacre was looking even lovelier than usual, and with the fires of love, despair, fear, raging in his heart, Lethbridge had lingered as near to her as he could. He followed her from this reception to a ball, at which she had promised to give him two dances, and it was only to have these that he went. It was at the ball that she spoke.

"What is the matter with you, Mr. Lethbridge?" she asked, with a pout. "You have scarcely spoken a dozen words to me all through these two waltzes. Are you ill?"

"Would you care very much if I were?" he asked, eagerly.

"I should care," she said with a laugh, but paling a little. "You must not get ill. What would our side do without you?"

"I'm not thinking of that!" with bitter impatience, for her loveliness, and the thought of how soon it would pass out of his reach, maddened him. "Do not coquette with me. Would you be sorry, if I broke down and failed?"

"I should be very sorry," she said, keeping her eyes on the feather-fan with which she was toying. "Because if you failed to become famous, you and I would never be allowed—able to meet again."

He understood perfectly. If he succeeded he might be allowed to win her— She loved him already, he saw that. But if he failed to fulfil the promises formed for him, she was lost to him for ever; and then as if it were not enough to be banished from her presence, there was the public dishonour the days were so rapidly bringing him. This would kill her love. He would not even have that remembrance to take into the exile of death. For he had made up his mind that he would not face the disgrace of the exposure. He would die first. And only those papers stood between him and life!

"I will not fail," he exclaimed, with fierce passion. "I will sell my soul rather to win you." Then, as he saw how he had frightened her, he added gently, with a strange smile, "men have to do hard battles sometimes, for the women they love. Luckily, the women sit too far off to hear the blows."

Lethbridge paced out the rest of that night in his own room; and with the dawn he had come to a decision. He was engaged that morning to a Parliamentary breakfast, and, afterwards, until luncheon, was occupied with some of his constituents. As soon as he was free, he drove to Jenkins's chambers. But when he arrived there, a clerk told him that he had not been there all day, and was not expected. Unless he were at his house on the river, none of the clerks could say where Mr. Lethbridge could find him.

Cursing the strangeness of his ill-luck—for he had never known Jenkins to be

absent before, without at least leaving word where, in case of great emergency, he could be found—Lethbridge left the office.

Possessed now with an overmastering desire to carry that decision of the morning into effect, he took the train for the house on the river which Jenkins had rented for the summer, on the chance of finding him there. He had to drive some little distance from Taplow station after he reached there, and thus it was growing rather late in the afternoon, when the carriage stopped at the gate leading to the house. Telling the driver to wait there for him, as he would only be delayed a few moments, he left the carriage at the gate, and walked up the path to the house. The front door stood open as he reached it. Jenkins's housekeeper, a pleasant-looking elderly woman, came out of a room near.

Yes, her master was there, she said in answer to an enquiry of Lethbridge's. He was in the garden; she would tell him.

A passage ran from the front door through the house, to another door opening on the garden, which sloped down to the river. This farther door, framed in roses, stood wide open, too, and, through it, Lethbridge caught a glimpse of sunlit award. He did not know what possessed him, unless it were that feverish, desperate desire to hasten the end; but instead of staying in the room to which the housekeeper led him, he followed her down to that farther, rose-framed door. There was a sound of voices, and of a laugh, which he recognised, and yet did not recognise. But it took him suddenly back to his far-off schoolboy days. Jenkins used to laugh like that when, in boyish, unthinking happiness, he and Lethbridge amused themselves together.

When he reached the doorway, he was roused for a moment from his own terrible preoccupation. The scene he saw was so totally different from anything he expected from Jenkins. A tea-table was set under a tree on the lawn, and about it were two or three comfortable chairs. A pale, fragile girl, looking as if she had just risen from a dangerous illness, leant back in one, smiling happily. Near her was a stout, matronly-looking woman, showing by her bonnet painful attempts at adorning herself for the occasion. She sat on the edge of her chair, poisoning her saucerful of tea on the tips of her fingers, while her cup stood on the grass at her feet. Her red, coarse, but honest face showed her anxiously

evident to appear at ease, and her hands looked as if charring were her daily occupation. At the tea-table was another girl. For she looked but a girl this afternoon. A long day in the sunny, rose-scented air had browned and tinted her cheeks and lips, and intense enjoyment had given back youth to her eyes. She was pouring out the tea, while Jenkins stood by her side, waiting to carry it to his strange guests. All three women were poorly, and, with the exception of the elderly one, simply clad. They looked like workwomen, except that the one at the table had something indescribably refined in her face and carriage.

In an unconscious way, Lethbridge took in the whole scene, and then his own intolerable personal excitement obliterated everything.

Jenkins, too absorbed in watching the face uplifted laughing to his, did not notice his housekeeper's approach till she spoke. Then he looked up and saw beyond, in the doorway, Lethbridge.

Every drop of blood left his face, till it became ashen grey. He set down the cup hastily on the table, and made a step or two forward. Then he stopped, and turned back to his guests.

"I must leave you for a little. Mrs. Gale will see that——" Then he turned away as if he had forgotten to finish his sentence, and went forward to join Lethbridge.

Neither of the men spoke a word in greeting, and Jenkins, leading the way into a small room near, closed and locked the door, then turned and faced Lethbridge.

"You have come——"

"Yes." Lethbridge made a hasty gesture to prevent Jenkins saying aloud what he had come for. "I have decided. I could face ruin, but not dishonour. And there is no other way. We must not lose any time, either. The shareholders are—— Jenkins, you know what must be done to save me!"

Jenkins nodded.

"And I say, Jenkins," in feverish eagerness, with a strange, hoarse laugh, "you shan't lose by it. We have stuck together ever since that——"

"Compact we made after murdering——"

"Curse you, Jenkins!" with a shuddering look about him. "What the devil do you mean by speaking like that?"

"I don't know. It was the thought of destroying those papers, perhaps. The money was his, and——"

He stopped. He was going to say, the woman who should have inherited, and to whom they were about to do this irreparable wrong, was there—close—in his garden. But somehow, he could not speak of her to—this man.

"Curse you!" said Lethbridge, fiercely, again. "Why do you call it such an ugly name? We did not know he was there. But there, I can't stay any longer; I'll leave it to you to do when you like—when it is safest. I can trust you; you've never failed me yet."

Then he hurried off, to take up once more the busy, ambitious, honoured life, which had been his since his schooldays till now, leaving Jenkins once more, too, to the underground work, which he had done from the old schooldays till now. It was Jenkins who had helped and saved him, over and over again, from the results of his wild extravagances, his fastidious tastes, his ambitious aims, to which his own modest patrimony had helped so little. By trickery, corruption, bribery, Jenkins had worked in Lethbridge's cause, while Lethbridge sailed fair before the wind of public approval, Jenkins being perfectly willing to run the risk of infamy for the chance of wealth; and Lethbridge had always dealt fairly by him, paying him well for his work, as he had done when Jenkins fagged for him at school.

Lethbridge would profit enormously by the destruction of these papers, of whose existence no one knew save they two; for the person from whose hands, by a strange accident, they had passed into Jenkins's keeping, was dead; and Jenkins himself would benefit largely. It would be sufficient to set him up above the necessity of business. This was a great consideration, for Jenkins's mode of practice was beginning to excite suspicion among his brothers of the robe; and one or two had begun to look rather coldly on him. He was quite young yet; little over thirty. It would be a serious thing to lose his business so early in life. One or two recent sharp transactions of his would, if known, be sufficient to get him struck off the rolls. It would be a wise thing to feather his nest now, so that, in case of emergency, he could retire to it.

He stood motionless for some moments in the creeper-shadowed parlour, from which all the sunlight had withdrawn. Then he went out again to his guests.

He was glad to get out into the hot sun-

shine again, for he seemed to have grown cold in the shadows of the room, from which the westerling sun was cut off. They had apparently been very happy in his absence. He had a strong suspicion that two at least had enjoyed themselves much more when freed from the restraint of his presence.

For Mrs. Jones was leaning back, talking volubly, interspersing her words with loud laughs, which ceased suddenly, with a swift upright movement back to the edge of her chair, at his reappearance; while Maria, who had relapsed into the more convenient, if less elegant fashion, of drinking hot tea from a saucer, hastily poured it back into her cup, and tried to look as if she had still been taking it after the fashion of Mr. Jenkins and Phemie Day herself. But the latter looked unfeignedly pleased to see him back. Her quick eyes, too, had discovered something that the others had not noticed. She had seen the blanching of his face, and had feared that the messenger in the doorway had brought bad news.

She looked up at him now, but though still a little pale, he gave no other signs of trouble, and, as he said nothing, she did not like to ask. But her unspoken sympathy expressed itself in her voice and eyes; for he had been so good to them, that she could not bear to see him in trouble.

Maria had left the hospital two days previously, and Jenkins had suggested that a day in the country would do her good, and persuaded Phemie Day to give up her work for a few brief hours and bring her down to his house on the river. To make it pleasanter for them, he had asked them to invite the woman who shared the other garret on that top landing, and who—honest and respectable—had been kind in many ways to them. The three lived up there, keeping themselves aloof from the rest of the inhabi-

tants of the house—not always too respectable.

They had enjoyed their day very much, and in different ways expressed their thanks, when the fly, ordered by Jenkins for them, arrived to take them back to the station.

Maria thanked him shyly, though the pretty effect of her blushing face was rather spoilt by a nervous giggle.

Phemie let her hand rest in his—for he seemed to have forgotten that he was holding it—and only said "Thank you," but her eyes shone like two stars, and her lips were as soft as he had dreamed that they might be that afternoon, three weeks before, in her garret.

Mrs. Jones dropped him a curtsy, and when he, with an effort at equality which did him credit, seeing how totally unaccustomed he was to ladies of her position and occupation, held out his hand, she touched it for a moment with her own coarse, hard palm, and then dropped it as if it had burned her. But she made a speech.

As Jenkins politely assisted her into the fly after the others, she glanced with what she meant to be an arch and meaning look at Phemie.

"Lor, sir, you've been most kind; quite the gentleman. We'll never forget that beautiful chicken, and puddens, an' things. But me and Maria knows who we've got to thank for it. You wouldn't a done it to sich as we, if it hadn't a bin for Phemie. Any one can see with 'arf an eye——"

At a word from Jenkins, the driver touched up his horse, and the end of Mrs. Jones's speech was scattered in the air, as she was jerked back in her seat. He did not know why he had given the sign. Perhaps for Phemie's sake.

For the last he saw of her, was with the crimson of outraged delicacy staining brow and throat, while her beautiful, steady eyes had fallen, in shocked and troubled shame, to his roses, which she held in her hands.

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